



What Were You Doing on December 1, 1969?

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On December 1, 1969, the Selective Service System of the United States conducted two lotteries to determine the order of call to military service in the Vietnam War for men born from January 1, 1944 to December 31, 1950. On that day, I was sitting in the bleachers of the old Memorial Hall watching a University of Akron basketball game. Every student around me had a portable radio listening for the start of the draft. As the draft started and dates were selected, the tension in the student section increased. Throughout the second half of the game, male students were yelling, “Oh my god, I’m number one,” or “Thank goodness, I’m 365.”

The moaning and screaming continued the entire game. My number was 236. I waited until the end of the week to call my Summit County Draft Board to find out my odds of getting drafted. I was told the county planned to go up and draft up to number 299. By February 15, I was sworn in for six years in the US Army Reserve Medical Corps.